

## GIRLS FROM THE FOUR WINDS

SUNDAY last was the tenth anniversary of the Royal Aero Club's model competition at the Alexandra Palace for prizes offered by the *Daily Mail*. It is almost unnecessary to remind our readers that the leading place was won by Mr. A. V. Roe.

THE military training of a pilot in the R.F.C., as is well known, includes a course of machine-gun firing at objects on the ground, and the following remarkable incident, for the accuracy of which one of our readers vouches, occurred recently at an aerodrome in the South of England. A pilot had been sent up, armed with a Lewis gun and 10 rounds of ammunition, to make his first attempt at a silhouette target on the ground representing an aeroplane. Circling round at a height of 400 or 500 feet he got his aim well on to the target, as he thought, but, unfortunately, it was not the target arranged for, but a real aeroplane which was just being pushed into a hangar. The pilot had just left his seat, which was distinctly lucky, for when the man above fired his 10 rounds, two went through the pilot's seat, two through the right wing, and three mechanics got two rounds each! That marksman has a future before him if he can only do as well when he gets over the German lines, but he must have had an uncomfortable quarter of an hour when he came down to hear what his score was. Fortunately the three mechanics were not seriously injured.

COLONEL LORD MONTAGU of Beaulieu is back again in London. He thus misses the summer in India, which is a little more than he could stand again. During Lord Montagu's stay in India he has done an enormous amount of missionary work for aviation, and has amongst other things been the means of securing £10,000 towards providing a flight of seaplanes for Bombay. He may be going back for another two years, but his presence here just now suggests to us possibilities in the direction of the Air Board. Lord Montagu is full of matters aviatric beyond these shores, and has views of his own regarding the new Italian Capronis as strafers.

EVER ingenious and original is Tommy in his leisure hours. One of his latest pastimes "out yonder" is to build miniature aeroplanes, with cartridge cases as bodies, Belgian nickels as wheels and bully-beef tins doing duty for wings. Quite a unique souvenir medley.

WHEREVER, the world over, there is a reading public, there is known with affection the name of John Oxenham. Not only by his delightful prose works has he held the world's attention in the years that have gone, but to his verses, since collected and published in charming little tomes, must always attach a huge following, from the human touch which almost every little poem carries with it. Therefore, a sympathetic line from John Oxenham the other day was all the more welcome, as it was accompanied by the one-hundredth part of an issue of the Author's "The Vision Splendid," which has but recently been issued by Methuen and Co. In this little volume are gathered together 60 or more of verses "for the times and the times to come," with the dedication "To all those who are looking forward with earnest expectation and steadfast determination to the emergence from this present chaos of a cosmos worthy of God and Humanity in this Twentieth Century of the Christian Era I dedicate this little book in confident hope."

IN itself the collection of verses is acceptable, but the motive of the compliment makes its receipt the more acceptable, the following note from John Oxenham accompanying the little volume:—

"I opened two letters this morning, one after the other—the first was from a lady in Huntingdon whose brother had just been killed in the Flying Corps. She begged me to write some lines for the Flying men. The next was from a lady in Reigate, begging me to send to 'FLIGHT' some lines on the Flying Men which appear in my new little volume of verse, 'The Vision Splendid.' She apparently thinks the boys would appreciate them, and so I am sending you a copy of the book and leave it to your discretion. If you care

to reproduce the lines you are quite at liberty to do so. They were written because my own boy is in R.F.C."

It was on page 26 we found this ode "To the White Knights of the Air Services":—

### On Eagles' Wings.

(TO THE WHITE KNIGHTS OF THE AIR SERVICES.)

*Supremely in His Hand are you,  
To whom the mighty joy is given  
On eagles' wings to climb the blue,  
And, on the pinions of the winds,  
To sweep the boundless plains of heaven.*

*So—to your minds*

*Be present this,*

*For cheer in your necessities,—*

Who swings the countless spheres in space,  
Yet to their even courses holds;  
Who set the firmament in place  
And its infinitudes unfolds,—  
Come what come may of hap or chance,  
He is your sure deliverance.

If but as Pilot by your side  
He sits, upon Whose breath you ride,  
He shall preserve you from alarms,  
Spread wide His everlasting arms,  
And bear you safely up on high  
In His most noble company.

No sparrow falls but it is known  
Of Him who sits on Heaven's high throne;  
And you, in your supremest hour,  
Shall feel the uplift of His power,  
And know you not alone.

Alone? Alone?  
None is alone!  
For where is one,  
There He is too.—  
No man goeth alone!

Higher than most, to you is given  
To live—or in His time, to die;  
So, bear you as White Knights of Heaven—  
The very flower of chivalry!  
Take Him as Pilot by your side,  
And "All is Well!" whate'er betide.

THE above is but one of many others in equally human vein, and, as another verse associated with the navigation of the air, we select the following couple of stanzas from the next page:—

### Searchlights.

The searchlights sweep the sombre skies,—  
Slow-wheeling,—focussed here and there,  
To catch the lurking treacheries  
Within their wide-flung whirling snare;  
And when they find the hidden foe  
The eager hunters lay him low.

God's mightier beams are searching out  
The Soul of Life and lighting it,  
That His fair hosts may put to rout  
The foes that have been blighting it;  
Sweep clean, O Lord, and beautify,  
And come Thou in and occupy!

IN the story of the withdrawal from Gallipoli it is being emphasised in the official communication that the enemy was hopelessly deceived as to the date of the final departure from his shores, his artillery fire on the final night of the evacuation being negligible. And well he might be deceived, in spite of incessant spying from above by aeroplane. The ruses which the navigation of the third element has brought into being are well exemplified by the following extract from Vice-Admiral de Robeck's despatch:—

"During the whole time (of the evacuation) there remained the paramount necessity of preventing the enemy gaining intelligence of what was in progress; this added greatly to the difficulties of work during daylight. Enemy aircraft